Abstract

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* Research significance
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*Intro and significance*

Missing persons reports account for a large proportion of calls received by police and represent one of the largest demands on police resource management. In the U.K, for example, it is estimated that a missing person is reported every two minutes. Research into missing persons have remained sparse especially in the field of quantitative studies, however, methods such as geospatial analysis are paramount in the safeguarding of vulnerable people and providing an evidenced based tool for public-policy and governance

*Methodology*

Using Calls for Service, this paper analysed 42,019 missing incidents from 2015 to 2020 across the county of Cheshire in order to provide a topographical perspective to the stories of *going missing*. Using time series analysis and LISA maps this paper draws on three main themes; the spatial and temporal patterns, changes in the handling of police responses over time and the association to specific environmental corelates.

*Results:*

The findings from theme 1 indicated that there is statistically significant moderate clustering of missing incidents in the county of Cheshire (*Local Moran’s I = 0.2453, P = 1e-05)*. Additionally, missing incidents trends are seasonal in nature. Theme 2 exposed that most grades are marked as a priority response and are handled mainly by public-non emergency services. There were also noticeable decline of trends following the start of COVID-19 as a result of changes to routine activities. The last theme indicated the association between areas high in deprivation and areas high in missing incident rates among urban LSOAs. Similarly, areas high in mental health issues are associated with a higher perveance of missing incident rates, only in urban LSOAs.

*Conclusion:*

This paper provides provide a comprehensive overview of missing persons trends across space and time, and an introduction to the benefits of spatial methods in exposing social and physical vulnerability.